



The following are the minutes of the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission meeting. The meeting was held on Saturday, September 18, 2021. Southern Utah University Hunter Conference Center, Grand Hall 301-557 W University Boulevard, Cedar City, UT 84720

Note: A copy of meeting materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Public Notice Website. The minutes may refer to the recording found on the Public Notice Website with the approximate number on the recording where an issue is being discussed.

Attendance - Commission Members

Chair, Utah Independent Redistricting Commission - Rex Facer
Commissioner Christine Durham
Commissioner Karen Hale
Commissioner Lyle Hillyard
Commissioner Jeff Baker
Commissioner Robert Bishop (virtually)

Attendance - Staff and Others in Attendance at Anchor Location:

Gordon Haight, Executive Director
Aly Escobar, Administrative Coordinator
Beau Bayless
Julianne Kidd
Sariah Morey
Joey Fica
Matt Cannon, Legal Counsel

Attendance – Public in Attendance

Paul Roelandt, Iron County Vision 2050
Scott Phillips, Cedar City Council
Stephine Hill
Chris Sorenson
Dale Rood
Glen Little
Kyle Friant, Better Boundaries

I. Open House

At the start of the meeting, an open house was held to allow the public to view drafted maps.

II. Welcome – Chair Rex Facer

Chair Facer welcomed everyone to the meeting at 11:40 AM, and introduced the commissioners in attendance and noted Commissioner Bishop was attending via Zoom.

III. Presentation: Redistricting Process – Rex Facer

Chair Facer moved to the next item and stated that he would explain some of the process of redistricting and how the commission functions.

He began by explaining that Proposition 4 in 2018 began the creation of the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission and after some compromise legislation in 2020 the commission was created. Chair Facer explained that the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission is an advisory commission to the legislature and would be giving the legislature drafted maps on November 1 with the legislature then deciding on the final maps.

Chair Facer explained that three commissioners were appointed by the Republican Legislative Leadership, Commissioners Hillyard, Bishop, and Baker, and that three were appointed by the Democratic Legislative Leadership, Commissioners Durham, Hale, and Thorne. Chair Facer explained that Commissioner Baker and Commissioner Thorne are independent of any party and that Chair Facer himself was appointed by the Governor. Chair Facer noted that the commissioners had been working very collaboratively and thanked the commissioners.

Chair Facer then explained that in normal years, the commissioners would have begun mapping earlier in the year, but due to COVID and a delay in the census data the commissioners had begun mapping in August. He then moved to explain how the commissioners had been divided into teams to create drafted maps and that these maps were designed to create discussion and were not the final suggested maps. Chair Facer noted that none of the commissioners were from southern Utah and that as such it was especially important that the commissioners get feedback from people living in southern Utah to inform the mapping process.

Chair Facer then went on to explain the criteria to be used by the commission. More information about these criteria can be found here: <https://uirc.utah.gov/uirc-meeting/synopsis-criteria-and-standards/>. In this explanation, Chair Facer mentioned the requirements for equal populations as being the fundamental criteria as the commissioner works to create maps for the Utah Congressional seats, Utah House, Utah Senate, and State School Board. He presented the various population numbers for each map type. He explained that in Iron County, there was enough population for a house district, but not for a senate, and so a key question for the public is what area Iron County would like to be joined with for a senate district.

Chair Facer then moved to explain the additional criteria adopted by the Utah Independent Redistricting Commission which can be found in the above link. In this explanation he touched on the importance of communities of interest and the need for the public to define where these communities are. He also mentioned that the commissioners have decided not to consider political data as they map. Chair Facer then asked for any comments from other commissioners.

Commissioner Durham noted that she didn't want the people of southern Utah to feel slighted over not having a commissioner from southern Utah, and explained that given the schedule the commissioners were currently working it would have been very difficult logistically for a commissioner to drive from somewhere like Cedar City to Salt Lake County to map several times a week.

Commissioner Hillyard echoed the sentiments from Commissioner Durham, and explained that the public can watch the mapping process live on YouTube. He also explained the importance of keeping the population deviation within the given limits and explained how changing one district has an effect on the

other districts, also mentioned some of his understanding of the relationship between St. George and Cedar City.

Chair Facer further explained how the public can comment on the map drawing process and the drafted maps through uirc.utah.gov. He also explained that the commissioners are taking public comments very seriously and working to apply them.

Commissioner Hale emphasized that given the makeup of the commission the comments received from this meeting and from the public in general are key to the process. She asked the public to encourage their peers to comment and give public input. She emphasized the desire of the commissioners to have the maps they draft represent the desire of the people.

Chair Facer explained the makeup of the mapping teams and explained how efforts were made to avoid placing the two democrats or two republicans on the same team and working to avoid any partisan bias or agenda.

IV. Presentation: City Leadership Delegations

V. Presentation: Public Comment – Sariah Morey

Chair Facer then turned the time to Sariah Morey to present on the commission website - uirc.utah.gov and how the public can use the website to submit comments. Sariah explained how the public can submit communities of interest, full maps, and written comments. Tutorials and links to these resources can be found at uirc.utah.gov.

VI. Presentation: Public Hearing Format – Gordon Haight

VII. Open Public Comment

Chair Facer then turned the time to public comment.

Scott Philips from the Cedar City Council addressed the commission, speaking on behalf of himself. His comments suggested that there may be more in common with the counties and areas to the north than Washington County, though he noted similarities to Washington County.

Chris Sorenson then addressed the commission. He asked if the population deviations were set by statute. Chair Facer explained that they were in part a constitutional mandate, but also based on decisions of the Legislative Redistricting Committee. Chris then discussed the difficulty of districts with incredibly large geographical districts. He also expressed some concern with being in a congressional district with Salt Lake County or Park City, suggesting Cedar City had more in common with areas such as Payson and parts of Utah County.

Dale Roon from Cedar City then addressed the commission. He expressed an interest in keeping more of southern rural part of Utah in one congressional district.

Glenn Little from Parawan addressed the commission. He discussed working to keep the culture of south western part of the state and suggested perhaps moving into the southern part of Utah County for Congressional Districts. For State Legislature he discussed Iron County being different than Washington County and suggested pairing Iron County with an area such as Beaver County over Washington County.

Paul Relant addressed the commission. He explained his work on a survey for a group called Iron County 2050 and expressed his hope that they could share information.

Commissioner Hillyard asked some more specific questions regarding how the public would like to see congressional maps created. He explained that one possible option with the population numbers would be to take the doughnut approach and have a district containing everything around the Wasatch Front. He then explained that some individuals had expressed less interest in a map like that however. He mentioned several possible approaches to creating maps for congressional districts as well as smaller districts, but asked the public for some advice on how maps could be created with general approaches. He asked for more input explaining what areas communities would like to be joined with for various districts. Commissioner Hillyard also discussed the pros and cons of having more than one representative for a City and discussed how race can and cannot be used in the redistricting process.

Chair Facer then spoke to highlight the importance getting input from the public and encouraged the public to also give their comments to the Legislative Redistricting Committee.

VIII. Close Public Comment

Chair Facer closed the public comment portion.

IX. Adjourn

Chair Facer then asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Hillyard motioned to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:36